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United Nations Population Fund

Draft country programme document for Nicaragua

Proposed UNFPA assistance: $25 million: $8 million from regular resources and $17 million through co-financing modalities and/or other, including regular, resources

Programme period: Five years (2008-2012)

Cycle of assistance: Seventh

Category per decision 2005/13: A

Proposed indicative assistance by core programme area (in millions of $):

	Regular resources	*Other*	*Total*
Reproductive health	2.05	13.0	15.05
Population and development	4.20	1.5	5.70
Gender	1.00	2.5	3.50
Programme coordination and assistance	0.75	—	0.75
Total	**8.00**	**17.0**	**25.00**

I. Situation analysis

1. Nicaragua is the largest country in Central America. The population, estimated at 5.1 million, is unequally distributed among the various regions of the country. With a per capital gross domestic product of $850, the country is the second poorest in Latin America, with wide disparities of wealth between rural and urban areas. Forty-seven per cent of national consumption falls within the richest quintile, whereas only 6 per cent falls within the poorest quintile.

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2. In January 2007, a new government took office, whose priorities are to combat poverty and hunger; ensure universal and free access to education and health care; and promote the participation of citizens in decision-making. The Government is currently revising the poverty reduction strategy paper and the national development plan.

3. Significant changes in the age structure of the population have occurred due to decreasing fertility rates. The dependency ratio dropped from 0.95 in 1995 to 0.72 in 2005. However, the country is not yet able to take advantage of the demographic transition.

4. External migration has influenced the development of the country. Remittances constitute 16 per cent of the gross domestic product.

5. The total fertility rate dropped from 4.9 children per woman in 1995 to 2.9 children per woman in 2005. However, there are disparities between geographical zones (where the rate ranges from 2.6 children per woman to 5.6 children per woman) and economic level (where the rate is 5.2 children per woman in the poorest quintile and 2.1 children per woman in the richest). The total fertility rate among adolescents is 119 births per 1,000 women; births to teenage mothers account for 20 per cent of all births.

6. The average contraceptive prevalence rate for modern methods is 69 per cent, though the rate is lower (60 per cent) in rural areas. This indicates a need to increase access to family planning services and to reduce the gap between real and desired fertility.

7. There is a need to revise sex education in schools. Strong sociocultural barriers limit access by adolescents to reproductive health information and services.

8. In 2005, the official estimated maternal mortality ratio was 89.6 deaths per 100,000 live births. However, many deaths are not registered, and there are large disparities between regions and within social and ethnic groups. The maternal mortality ratio among those of African descent and among the indigenous population of the Caribbean coast is 2.1 times higher than the national ratio. Skilled health personnel attend only 43 per cent of births of first-time pregnant women, compared to 95 per cent of births of first-time pregnant women in urban areas. Adolescents account for one third of all maternal deaths. Obstetric emergencies, a lack of high-quality prenatal care, and limited access to health services are the major causes of maternal and perinatal morbidity and mortality.

9. The annual registered HIV rate has tripled in the last six years, and indicates a feminization of the epidemic. However, many HIV cases are not registered. Access to voluntary testing is limited, and condom use is low due to cultural factors. Forty-eight per cent of reported HIV cases are among people aged 10-29 years.

10. Gender inequality persists. Despite advances, women's rights are not fully incorporated into national legislation. Most women work in the informal sector, earning incomes below the cost of the basic market basket. Women have limited access to social protection. On average, women's income is 30 per cent lower than men's. Only 18 per cent of members of parliament are women, reflecting a decline in comparison to previous legislatures. Violence against women is a major social problem. Close to 30 per cent of women in union reported being victims of sexual or physical abuse from their partner.

II. Past cooperation and lessons learned

11. UNFPA assistance to Nicaragua began in the mid-1970s. The sixth country programme (2002-2006) totalled $18 million ($5.5 million from regular resources and $12.5 million from other resources). UNFPA and the Government extended the programme to 2007 in order to harmonize the programme cycles of the United Nations Development Group Executive Committee agencies and align them with national election cycles.

12. Within the framework of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, the country office has provided technical and financial support to the sector-wide approach in the health sector and to the Fund for Gender Equity and Sexual and Reproductive Rights. This has leveraged additional resources for the agenda of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD).

13. UNFPA made important contributions to formulating several ICPD-related legal, programme and sectoral frameworks through advocacy, consensus-building and strengthened partnerships with political and social actors. Challenges remain in terms of implementing the programme, allocating adequate resources, and creating participatory monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

14. UNFPA provided technical and financial support to the 2005 census, including validating and disseminating census data and promoting its use among the Government, donors and the media.

15. UNFPA provided support to the police and military academies to incorporate, in their curricula, information on reproductive health and rights, gender, and the prevention of sexually transmitted infections, HIV/AIDS and domestic violence. In addition, UNFPA chaired the HIV/AIDS theme group, which helped to coordinate the work of the national commission on HIV/AIDS and the United Nations system, and to promote the rights of people living with HIV/AIDS.

III. Proposed programme

16. The proposed programme is based on the priorities identified in the common country assessment and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and takes into account national priorities, the Millennium Development Goals, the ICPD Programme of Action and the draft UNFPA strategic plan, 2008-2011.

17. The programme, which incorporates a gender and human rights approach, consists of three components: (a) reproductive health; (b) population and development; and (c) gender. Strategies will include: (a) the participation in harmonization and alignment mechanisms in the areas of health, gender and statistics; (b) political dialogue to place ICPD issues on the public agenda; (c) capacity development, with a focus on the autonomous regions and selected municipalities; (d) strengthening strategic alliances and mobilizing social, political and financial support; (e) advocacy and communication; (f) development of evidence-based interventions; (g) interagency and intersectoral coordination; and (h) programme interventions at both national and local levels.

Reproductive health component

18. The expected outcome of the reproductive health component, which is aligned with the UNDAF, the Millennium Development Goals and the Millennium Declaration, is: the Government, along with civil society, guarantees and promotes the right of individuals to exercise their right to sexual and reproductive health services and to sex education, with a gender focus.

19. *Output 1: Improved quality of sexual and reproductive health services in order to promote family planning, reduce maternal mortality, and prevent cervical cancer and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV and AIDS, with a priority on adolescents, youth, women and male participation, focusing on the autonomous regions and the most excluded municipalities.* UNFPA will: (a) support the implementation and monitoring of the national strategy on sexual and reproductive health within the framework of the integrated health model; (b) support sexual and reproductive health and a gender perspective through the health sector-wide approach; and (c) strengthen, both financially and logistically, the reproductive health commodity security programme, including comprehensive condom programming; (d) strengthen demand for high-quality sexual and reproductive health services and HIV prevention services.

20. *Output 2: Civil society, communities and health services are strengthened to improve sexual and reproductive health and to reduce maternal mortality and morbidity, with an emphasis on the autonomous regions and the most excluded municipalities and groups.* UNFPA will support: (a) intersectoral coordination with key actors; (b) the strengthening of community organizations; (c) attention to sociocultural factors that affect deliveries; (d) capacity-building of service providers and community leaders; (e) the strengthening of maternity waiting homes for pregnant women; (f) the implementation of emergency obstetric care protocols; and (g) the strengthening of selected health units, including the provision of equipment and sexual and reproductive health supplies.

21. *Output 3: Strengthened national, regional and local capacity for implementing educational policies on reproductive health and rights.* UNFPA will support the Ministry of Education, other government institutions and civil society in: (a) mainstreaming sex education, reproductive rights and the prevention of gender-based violence in formal and informal education programmes; and (b) training school counsellors and facilitators.

22. *Output 4: Individuals, especially adolescents and youth in selected municipalities, have developed life skills to enable them to exercise their reproductive rights.* UNFPA will support: (a) broadening opportunities for such individuals, in order to enable them to be active citizens; (b) the development of life skills; and (c) intersectoral work at the local level.

Population and development component

23. The outcomes of this component are aligned with the UNDAF and contribute to formulating, implementing and evaluating public policies and to strengthening the national statistical system. The outcomes of this component are: (a) public policies, poverty-reduction plans and sectoral programmes incorporate population dynamics, gender and reproductive health issues; and (b) government institutions and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) produce, disseminate and utilize

disaggregated data on population dynamics, gender equality, sexual and reproductive health, and youth.

24. *Output 1: Strengthened national and local capacity of the Government and civil society to incorporate population dynamics (including issues such as migration and urbanization), reproductive rights and gender in formulating, implementing, monitoring and evaluating public policies, poverty-reduction plans and expenditure frameworks.* UNFPA will assist in: (a) generating and distributing evidence-based data for dialogue at the highest political level; (b) taking advantage of the benefits of the demographic transition; (c) supporting the creation of mechanisms to monitor the inclusion of population dynamics, reproductive rights and gender in public policies; (d) training national and local experts on population and development issues; and (e) developing local geographical information systems.

25. *Output 2: Strengthened commitment and capacity of adolescents, youth and selected institutions to formulate, implement, monitor and evaluate public policies that affect adolescents and youth, and to undertake social monitoring activities.* UNFPA will: (a) promote studies; (b) provide assistance for the formulation, evaluation and implementation of specific policies; (c) support advocacy activities; and (d) strengthen the participation of youth and adolescents in political dialogue and their capacity to influence public policies.

26. *Output 3: Increased capacity of the national statistical system to produce, analyse, disseminate and promote the use of sociodemographic information and to monitor progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals at national and local levels.* UNFPA will: (a) support post-census activities and surveys and improve statistical registries; and (b) promote and support the creation of a sector-wide approach to develop and finance the national statistical system.

Gender component

27. The expected outcome of this component is: (a) gender, as a cross-cutting issue, is mainstreamed at national and municipal levels and in the autonomous regions; and (b) sociocultural practices to enable women to exercise their human rights, in particular their reproductive rights, are addressed. The gender component contributes to the UNDAF outcomes related to governance, the Millennium Development Goals and social rights.

28. *Output 1: Increased capacity of government institutions and civil society to promote, guarantee and monitor legal, financial and political frameworks on gender equality and the rights of women and adolescent girls, especially their reproductive rights.* UNFPA will support: (a) the strengthening of the Nicaraguan Institute for Women and other selected institutions that implement, monitor and evaluate the national gender programme and policy; (b) the development of a national system to monitor gender and reproductive health indicators; (c) the promotion, implementation and monitoring of relevant international conventions; (d) the promotion of conciliatory policies between women's productive and reproductive work; and (e) the new aid modalities, such as the fund for gender equity and sexual and reproductive rights, and sector-wide approaches.

29. *Output 2: Enhanced capacity of women in selected municipalities to develop initiatives that reduce poverty and expand their productive and reproductive options.* UNFPA will: (a) support the development of gender-sensitive plans and

budgets in the autonomous regions and in selected municipalities; (b) support the participation of women in municipal planning processes; and (c) advocate and link microcredit, training, and sexual and reproductive health services in selected municipalities, using an integrated approach.

30. *Output 3: Strengthened capacity of government and civil society institutions to prevent, address and monitor gender-based violence.* UNFPA will: (a) support the national programme to prevent and address gender-based violence; (b) promote the participation of men in programmes that seek to prevent violence against women; and (c) help to prevent, address and monitor gender-based violence in selected municipalities.

IV. Programme management, monitoring and evaluation

31. A results-based management approach will guide programme implementation. UNFPA and the Government will monitor programme execution in accordance with the UNDAF monitoring and evaluation plan. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and UNFPA will establish, with their partners and with the Technical Secretariat of the Presidency, a programme management committee to oversee programme activities and provide strategic guidance. The Government and UNFPA will make supervisory project visits and conduct annual programme reviews.

32. UNFPA and the Government will utilize the national execution modality to implement the programme, using the harmonized approach to cash transfers whenever possible. UNFPA technical advisers and national consultants will provide technical assistance.

33. The UNFPA office in Nicaragua consists of a UNFPA representative, an assistant representative and a number of national programme and support staff. UNFPA will earmark programme funds for national programme staff and support personnel, in order to strengthen the capacity of the office and to meet the demands of the new aid modalities and United Nations reform efforts. UNFPA has already begun to mobilize additional non-core resources for the programme.

Results and resources framework for Nicaragua

Programme component	Country programme outcomes, indicators, baselines and targets	Country programme outputs, indicators, baselines and targets	Partners	Indicative resources by programme component
National priorities: rights to health, literacy, education and water **UNDAF outcomes:** achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and the guarantee of social rights				
Reproductive health	Outcome 1: The Government, along with civil society, guarantees and promotes the right of individuals to exercise their right to sexual and reproductive health services, with a gender focus Outcome indicators: • Reduced adolescent pregnancies • Reduced number of new HIV infections among adolescents and youth • Increased percentage of health units implementing priority interventions of the national strategy on sexual and reproductive health • Increased usage of health units with basic and full emergency obstetric care • Increased national budget for reproductive health commodities	Output 1: Improved quality of sexual and reproductive health services in order to promote family planning, reduce maternal mortality, and prevent cervical cancer and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV and AIDS, with a priority on adolescents, youth, women and male participation, focusing on the autonomous regions and the most excluded municipalities Output indicators: • User satisfaction rate increased, including HIV and youth services • Protocols on quality of care implemented • Coverage of sexual and reproductive health services increased • Increased resources for sexual and reproductive health through the sector-wide approach Output 2: Civil society, communities and health services are strengthened to improve sexual and reproductive health and reduce maternal mortality and morbidity, with an emphasis on the autonomous regions and the most vulnerable municipalities and groups Output indicators: • Percentage of functioning local maternal mortality commissions • Number of equipped maternity waiting homes • Increased number of basic and comprehensive emergency obstetric care facilities per 500,000 population Output 3: Strengthened national, regional and local capacity for implementing educational policies on reproductive health and rights Output indicators: • Percentage of educational institutions that include in their curricula education on population, sex education and reproductive health • Percentage of educators with skills in the areas of population, sex education and reproductive health • Percentage of schools with counselling units Output 4: Individuals, especially adolescents and youth in selected municipalities, have developed life skills to enable them to exercise their reproductive rights Output indicators: • Percentage of municipalities and local organizations allocating resources to communal and community programmes on sexual and reproductive health • Percentage of adolescents and youth assuming leadership roles	Ministry of Education; Ministry of Health; Municipalities; Police and military academies; Nicaraguan Institute of Information for Development; Centre for Health Promotion; Technical Department of the Presidency; The Youth Institute Bretton Woods Institutions; United Nations organizations Donors, Media; Selected NGOs	$15.05 million ($2.05 million from regular resources and $13 million from other resources)
National priorities: (a) economic revitalization; combating malnutrition, hunger and poverty; (b) energy, the environment and water sanitation; and (c) the national statistical system **UNDAF outcomes:** formulating, implementing and evaluating public policies and strengthening the national statistical system				
Population and development	Outcome 1: Public policies, poverty-reduction plans and sectoral programmes incorporate population dynamics, gender and reproductive health	Output 1: Strengthened national and local capacity of the Government and civil society to incorporate population dynamics (including issues such as migration and urbanization) and reproductive rights and gender in formulating, implementing, monitoring and evaluating public policies, poverty-reduction plans and expenditure frameworks Output indicators: • Increased number of government and civil society professionals with knowledge and skills to incorporate population dynamics in public policies, poverty reduction plans and expenditure frameworks • Percentage of national, regional and local budget dedicated to population issues increased • Number of municipalities that incorporate selected population issues in local plans increased	Presidency; National Assembly; Municipalities; Autonomous regional councils Universities; local development networks; private sector; selected NGOs	$5.7 million ($4.2 million from regular resources and $1.5 million from other resources)

Programme component	Country programme outcomes, indicators, baselines and targets	Country programme outputs, indicators, baselines and targets	Partners	Indicative resources by programme component
Population and development (cont'd)	Outcome indicators: • Level of coherence between public sectoral policies and population dynamics • Selected public policies incorporating the Millennium Development Goals Outcome 2: Government institutions and NGOs produce, disseminate and utilize disaggregated data on population dynamics, gender equality, sexual and reproductive health, and youth Outcome indicators: • Improved quality of information • Level of use of the information	Output 2: Strengthened commitment and capacity of adolescents, youth and selected institutions to formulate, implement, monitor and evaluate public policies that affect adolescents and youth, and to undertake social monitoring activities Output indicators: • Institutional capacity of the National Youth Institute increased • Number and type of social monitoring mechanisms used by youth • Number and type of alliances promoting youth policies Output 3: Increased capacity of the institutions of the national statistical system to produce, analyse, disseminate and promote the use of sociodemographic information and to monitor progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals at national and local levels Output indicators: • Institutional capacity increased • Increase in the percentage of the institutional budget dedicated to producing, analysing and disseminating results • Number and type of national, local or sectoral Millennium Development Goal reports and studies	The Youth Institute; Media Bretton Woods institutions; United Nations organizations; Donors	
National priorities: (a) poverty reduction, and (b) decentralization, participation and good governance **UNDAF outcomes**: (a) good governance; (b) achievement of the Millennium Development Goals; and (c) the guarantee of social rights				
Gender	Outcome 1: (a) gender is institutionalized at national and municipal levels and in the autonomous regions, and (b) sociocultural practices to enable women to exercise their human rights, in particular their reproductive rights, are improved Outcome indicators: • Optional protocol to the Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women ratified • Incidence of violence against women decreased • Increased percentage of women in selected municipalities participating in development initiatives	Output 1: Increased capacity of government institutions and civil society to promote, guarantee and monitor legal, financial and political frameworks on gender equality and the rights of women and adolescent girls, especially their reproductive rights Output indicators: • Percentage of the budget related to gender in selected institutions increased • Assessments on gender issues carried out and recommendations implemented • National programme and laws on gender equity updated and implemented Output 2: Enhanced capacity of women in selected municipalities to develop initiatives that reduce poverty and expand their productive and reproductive options Output indicators: • Number of initiatives developed by women that contribute to poverty reduction • Number of initiatives that expand women's productive and reproductive options Output 3: Strengthened capacity of government and civil society institutions to prevent, address and monitor gender-based violence Output indicators: • Budget allocation to prevent and address violence against women increased • Effectiveness of the application of norms regarding gender-based violence increased	National Assembly; Technical Department of the Presidency; Nicaraguan Women's Institute; Selected local governments; Regional governments; National police; Selected civil society organizations and movements; Media Donors; Bretton Woods institutions; United Nations organizations	$3.5 million ($1 million from regular resources and $2.5 million from other resources) Total for programme coordination and assistance: $0.75 million